

Country of the Week: Namibia

Did you know that Namibia is home to the world's oldest desert?

Geographically vast, Namibia is filled with spectacular natural attractions. As a result, the landscape entices visitors with a thriving ecotourism industry. From lodges and reserves to extreme sports, Namibia welcomes the adventurous spirit within all of us!

Apart from breathtaking scenery, Namibia has a burgeoning set of media and entertainment options, including TV stations, radio stations, and daily newspapers, in addition to several weeklies, and specialty publications. Citizens value their media freedom, and embrace state-run, independent, and foreign coverage alike.

While The Republic of Namibia has much to offer, its most valuable quality rests in the character of its people. Namibia's vibrant cities are brimming with transformative thinkers, yet its endless horizons keep communities deeply connected to a rich, cultural past. For this reason, we've named Namibia the YALI Network #CountryoftheWeek.

Read on to learn more about the impact Namibian members make in their communities every day!

"I always believed that I wanted to have my own school," says Hans Haikali (Courtesy photo)



Our first featured member, Hans Haikali from Onheleiwa. After losing his parents at a young age, Hans dreamed of empowering less-fortunate youth, who experienced similar hardships.

That dream became reality when Hans opened his very own school, teaching Kindergarten through Grade 6. "I always believed that I wanted to have my own school," he recalls. Despite limited resources, Hans makes an impact in the lives of hundreds of children each year.

Hans even ensures that 10 percent of his school's students receive tuition assistance. His efforts are recognized and appreciated throughout the community, and Hans hopes that "young people in Namibia, SADC, and Africa at large understand that it does not matter where you started in life. With hard work, you can follow and succeed in your most ambitious dreams."

Hans notes the school's overall pass rate of 93 percent, and he credits YALI's excellent resources in helping him with such an ambitious project.

(Courtesy of Deon Mandume)



Our next featured member, Deon Mandume, has been part of the YALI Network since 2014, completing a wide array of [YALI Network Online Courses](#).

Living in Windhoek, Deon's active participation in the YALI Network includes taking the #YALIGoesGreen and #Africa4Her pledges, as well as hosting #YALILearns events. "The YALI Network supported my interests in socio-economic development and allowed me to tap into a collective wealth of resources," he notes.

Inspired by YALI resources, Deon continuously contributes to community discussions on important topics like human rights and climate change. He even worked with a national radio station to discuss the importance of Earth Day.

Deon considers the power of leadership invaluable to communities, and he believes that YALI teaches “vital skills such as networking, communication, and civic responsibility.” Most importantly, the YALI Network members encourage him to take action “knowing that I am part of an active and growing force of positive change.”

(Courtesy of Josaphat Tjiho)



Our last featured Namibian member this week, Josaphat Tjiho, also comes from Windhoek. Like Deon, he has completed many of the YALI Network Online Courses.

With an interest in community development and civic engagement, Josaphat focuses his energy on important issues such as climate change, building youth self esteem, and puberty education. He and a colleague initiated a campaign called “HERE4HER that manufacturers and distributes reusable sanitary pads for disadvantaged school girls.”

His ambitious efforts are truly transforming his community, and he was “selected to become the country coordinator for the YALI RLC Namibian chapter, as well as the country coordinator for the [International Youth Alliance for Family Planning](#).”

He credits YALI for many opportunities, and says, “I would like to thank YALI for helping me become the change I wish to see.”
